

REMARKS

Claim Status

Claims 1, 3-14, and 16-20 are pending. Applicants have amended Claims 1 and 14.

Claim Amendments

Claims 1 and 14 have been amended to correct informalities in the claims. No new matter has been entered by these amendments.

Claim Objections

In section 2 of the present Office Action, claims 1-7, 14, and 16-20 have been rejected to because of informalities. Claims 1 and 14 have been amended, and applicants believe that such amendments overcome the objections to the claims.

Claim Rejections -- 35 U.S.C. § 103

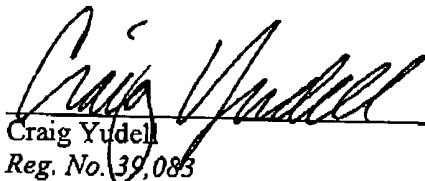
In section 4 of the present Office Action, claims 1, 3, 6, 8, 10, 12-14, 16, and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Publication 2002/0088615 to *Dixon et al.* ("*Dixon*") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,963,887 to *Giorgio* and JP405056178 to *Fujisaka*. In section 5 of the present Office Action, claims 4, 11, and 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Dixon et al.* ("*Dixon*") in view of *Giorgio* and *Fujisaka* as applied to claims 1, 2, 8, and 14 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,926,386 to *Ott et al.* ("*Ott*"). In section 7 of the present Office Action, claims 7 and 20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Dixon et al.* ("*Dixon*") in view of *Giorgio* and *Fujisaka* as applied to claims 1 and 14 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,604,654 to *Wille et al.* Those rejections are respectfully traversed and reconsideration of the claims is requested.

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 1, 3-14 and 16-20 under Section 103 is improper pursuant to the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 103(c). The present application was filed on January 23, 2001, which is after November 29, 1999, and has been rejected in view of 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)/103 prior art, which was commonly owned or assigned at

the time the invention was made (see M.P.E.P. § 706.02(1)(1)). As the Examiner will note by reference to the *Dixon* patent and to the assignment records for the present application, both were commonly owned by International Business Machines Corporation at the time the claimed invention was made. Consequently, pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 103(c), *Dixon* cannot preclude patentability under Section 103(a), and does not support the present rejection of Claims 1, 3-14 and 16-20.

In light of the above, Applicants believe that the present rejection is not applicable to the claims, and that all other objections and rejections have been overcome. Therefore, a Notice of Allowance of the claims now pending in the present application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Craig Yudell
Reg. No. 39,083

BRACEWELL & PATTERSON, L.L.P.
P.O. Box 969
Austin, Texas 78767-0969
Tel.: 512.472.7800

ATTORNEY FOR APPLICANT(S)

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